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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TONICS GIVEN HYPODERMICALLY

DEAR EDITOR: It is always interesting to see the various methods of treatment in the different countries. When I was first in Paris it seemed curious to me that the doctor ordered the tonic given hypodermically for a patient who went out daily but after several years of observation I have come to the conclusion that in many cases the French method is a good one.

In America we feel that the patient must be seriously ill, if not dangerously so, when a daily hypodermic is ordered but in France the most common tonics, such as strychnine, arsenous acid and glycono-phosphates, are given hypodermically as is "Serum Fraisse," a well-known and much used tonic which is a combination of the three. Of course we know that in medicine taken by mouth, about one-third is lost; the action is slow and with a patient whose digestion is not of the best, a tonic by mouth is sometimes of little service. In France tablets are never used for the hypodermics but instead each dose is sterilized and put up by the chemist in a tiny glass bottle called an ampoule. By this method one is certain that the solution is sterile and the dose exact. The fluid can only be drawn up into the syringe by breaking one end of the ampoule. Camphorated oil seems to be one of the most popular and generally used of the stimulating hypodermics and by placing the ampoule in a medicine glass of boiling water for five minutes, the oil runs freely and is less difficult to handle. Caffeine and ether are also widely used, quinine sometimes, in fact all the medicines given in America by mouth are used in France hypodermically if so desired. The only drawback to these little ampoules is the expense, a dozen ampoules of strychnine gr. $\frac{3}{8}$ costing eighty cents.

I have never seen any bad result to the skin from these frequent *pigures*. The doctors abroad always have the syringe, as well as the needle, boiled each time even for an absolutely clean case. The needles in France are different from ours in America. They cost anywhere from fifty cents to one dollar each but are well worth the extra money, for they can be used indefinitely, sometimes as long as two years, can be boiled repeatedly and after two or three months' use, can be sent to the instrument maker to be sharpened, when they are as good as new.

Another stimulant which with us is used only as a last extremity is oxygen. In France this is used as a daily tonic with excellent results. It is frequently ordered three times a day for five minutes. Another tonic that seemed curious to me when administered to a child of seven years, was a small cup of black coffee, about a dessert spoon given after luncheon. This last is a favorite tonic of one of the greatest of the Paris specialists for children.

New York.

M. G.

TO ENTERTAIN THE SICK

DEAR EDITOR: I take pleasure in submitting a conversation held with an invalid friend of mine which might suggest ideas of use to nurses during long cases.

"I take great delight in outdoor sports," said an invalid to an inquiring caller. The caller looked mystified and the invalid explained: "When I first